

**SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS:**

Kindly amend the second paragraph of page 3 as follows --

The term micro staple fibers used above means synthetic fibers of a fiber strength of  $\leq 1$  dtex. The term micro staple fibers thereby means that microfibers of a defined length or defined length range are used for producing the fiber fleece layer or a band or cord-shaped fiber fleece for the cotton head at the free ends of the cotton swabs, the fibers having been previously formed in a separate production method. These separated staple fibers are then deposited to form the fiber material. ~~Fibers formed by spinning fleece or melt blown methods, with (see US 4,100,342) the fiber forming and fleece forming processes being essentially carried out in one step, are not used. On the contrary,~~ microfibers Microfibers of a certain length or of a certain length region ( $> 7\text{mm}$ ) are used which are formed in a production method which is separate from the fleece forming process. It has turned out that synthetic micro staple fibers can provide a cotton swab or the cotton head of a cotton swab with more softness and therefore with an excellent haptic effect for the user while surprisingly not reducing the cleaning or make-up removing effect or the solidity of the cotton head. In fact, inventive cotton swabs having micro staple fibers of a length of at least 7mm actually have superior cleaning and make-up removing effect and are better suited to e.g. remove fat-containing dirt from the ear than are cotton swabs which consist of 100% cotton fibers. --.